

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-14 (Cancelled)

Claim 15 (Currently amended) A composite guidewire, comprising:

an elongated, flexible core, said core having a proximal region, a distal region, and an intermediate tapered region between said proximal and distal regions ~~proximal and distal regions~~;

a reinforcement tube disposed over said proximal region of said core, said reinforcement tube including a distal tapered portion extending over said intermediate tapered ~~distal~~ region of said elongated, flexible core;

a primary coil disposed over said distal region of said core; and

a coating of a heat shrinkable material disposed over said distal tapered portion of said reinforcement tube and said intermediate tapered region of said elongated, flexible core.

Claim 16 (Previously presented) The composite guidewire of Claim 15, wherein said elongated, flexible core comprises a rod.

Claim 17 (Previously presented) The composite guidewire of Claim 15, wherein said elongated, flexible core comprises at least one strand.

Claim 18 (Previously presented) The composite guidewire of Claim 15, wherein said elongated, flexible core comprises a hypo tube.

Claim 19 (Previously presented) The composite guidewire of Claim 15, wherein said reinforcement tube comprises an elongated ground stainless steel hypo tube.

Claim 20 (Previously presented) The composite guidewire of Claim 15, wherein said reinforcement tube comprises titanium.

Claim 21 (Previously presented) The composite guidewire of Claim 15, wherein said reinforcement tube comprises a nickel titanium alloy.

Claim 22 (Cancelled)

Claim 23 (Previously presented) The composite guidewire of Claim 15, wherein said coating of a heat shrinkable material comprises an elongated tube of polytetrafluoroethylene.

Claim 24 (Previously presented) The composite guidewire of Claim 15, wherein said primary coil comprises at least one nickel titanium alloy strand.

Claim 25 (Previously presented) The composite guidewire of Claim 15, wherein said primary coil comprises at least one platinum wire.

Claim 26 (Previously presented) The composite guidewire of Claim 24, wherein said primary coil further comprises at least one platinum wire.

Claims 27-28 (Cancelled)